

THE JOY OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

by Johnny Felker

In Philippians 3:12-21 Paul sets forth seven important principles that will enable us to experience the joy of spiritual growth. They describe the attitudes with which Paul approached his service to God and suggest some worthy goals for all of us.

We need a consciousness of imperfection. After serving God for over twenty-five years Paul could have said, "I have nowhere to go, I cannot advance in faith. Rather he said, *"I have not yet become perfect."* And so like Paul, we need to approach our lives as Christians with humility and unworthiness.

We need to make excellence a priority. We live under the tyranny of the urgent. Thousands of things scream for our attention and time, but only one thing is important. We need to slow down and reflect upon what we are doing with our lives! What is our ultimate priority?

We need to forge the past and live in the present. Paul did not allow his sins of the past to cause him to wallow in self-pity and inactivity; nor did he allow his accomplishments to lead him to a smug contentment. If anyone could have ever said, "I've done enough," it would have been Paul. Yet Paul was concerned about the present: *"I press on..."*

We need to look for further enlightenment. If we want our joy to grow, we need to make it a priority to listening to God's voice every way we can. Get your Bible out every day and study the word of God personally! Paul speaks of how through earnest pursuit of righteousness God will continue to reveal His will to us.

We need to practice what we have

learned. When we approach the word of God for study, we need to let it have its transforming power in our lives. Essential to our spiritual growth is not only the important practice of listening to God, but also of talking to God. As we do that, we find renewed encouragement and power to live as we have prayed! Let us all live by that standard to which we have attained! A life of faith demands no less of us!

We need to model ourselves after godly people. As we proceed through life we need the encouragement of those who live the life of a Christian well. We need to develop special friends who are spiritual people with whom we can share our faith. Paul urges the Philippians to make him and those like him mentors in their lives: *"...join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us"*.

We need to consider where our course takes us. From time to time we need to stop and ask ourselves, "Where is the course I am taking leading me?" When we follow our own desires and mind earthly things, we are headed for destruction! When we live as a citizen of heaven, listening to the commands of our King, we can look to the future with hope and optimism. *"Our citizenship is in heaven from which we eagerly await the Savior..."*, Paul says.

Now is a good time to take a spiritual inventory. Are you living by these principles? If not, you are missing one of the great secrets to a joyous life!

Preacher's Pen Points - www.truthchasers.com
Perry Heights Church of Christ - Nashville, TN

If you are a Christian, remember that men judge your Lord by you.

News & Notes

CALENDAR CORRECTION/ADDITION: William Jess (not Jeff) Wright, June 24th. **ADD:** Jason & Carrie Wright's anniversary, June 30, 2001.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Joe Hopwood on his recent graduation from Oak Glen High School. Best wishes to him.

SPECIAL THANKS: To Carrie Wright for being in charge, and all who provided food, money or served in any way for the meal following our Friday night sing. It was a job well done and greatly appreciated.

SCHEDULED FOR SURGERY: Fred Rayl, June 8th at Trinity West, Steubenville; Tom Manning (Jason Wright's step-dad), June 8th in Pittsburgh; Okey Phares (John's dad), June 9th at Camden Clark Hospital, Parkersburg.

CARE & SHARE BEARS: Each Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. All ladies invited.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: June 14th-18th. Adult Class: Ed Melott.

POTTER'S CHILDREN'S HOME: *White Rice, Italian Salad Dressing, Lysol Spray, D Batteries, and Cheerios* or money donations are needed by the week of June 20, 2010. Jerry Shultz is in charge of this project.

GOSPEL MEETING: West Canton - - - - - June 20-24 - - - - F. Higginbotham **CAMP: June 28th-July 3rd.**

60's REUNION: Several former members of this congregation are planning a get-together Saturday, July 3rd, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Multipurpose Building. If you are part of this group, plan to attend.

PANTRY: Oatmeal.

BOX TOPS & LABELS FOR EDUCATION: See the bulletin board for details and sample labels to save for Mid-Western Children's Home.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER: George Wiersbicki (Ed's brother); Ed Clutter (Eva Steff's brother in Georgia); Desiree Tiller (Connie Cowdery's niece in Alabama); Michael Crain and Lois Dougherty (nephew and sister of Linda White).

FOX NURSING HOME: Ruby Eddy, Room 19.

THOSE WITH MEDICAL CONCERNS: Araya White, Tim Adkins, Lester Six (Marilyn Miller's dad), Thelma Barnhart (grandmother of Tracy Clutter), Blondina Orr, Mary Jane Bowers, Marilyn Miller, Rich Robinson, Harry Nice. **In Iowa:** Jack Board. **Check the bulletin board for others who are shut in.**

*Time is
Running
Out*

◆◆◆ Take Time ◆◆◆

To think — it is the source of power.

To play — it is the secret of perpetual youth.

To read — it is the fountain of wisdom.

To pray — it is the greatest power on earth.

To love and be loved — it is a God-given privilege.

To be friendly — it is the road to happiness.

- Author Unknown -